Central government brought ordinance on Food security there by aiming to ensure 67% of the Indian population highly subsidised food grains. People in government are considering it no less than “Right to Food” for the underprivileged and poor masses of India. However, this ordinance has again repeated the larger question before us, which had also been raised so many times on different national and international forums “What is Right to Food and how do we ensure it in India?”.

We can discuss and debate at length on this issue but one thing is sure that “Right to Food” is not just giving away food, its much beyond that, though providing subsidised food to those who can not afford is certainly a part of it. But, this is not a sustainable way of ensuring it to all population.

Especially in context of many parts of Jharkhand this kind of schemes and programmes look a mere joke. History of Jharkhand has been more or less a history of displacement and continuous uprooting of indigenous people from their land. Thereby giving a head way to rampant mining and industrialisation, which so far has done no good to the indigenous people here apart from snatching their livelihood, alienating them from their mother land, deceiving them in name of development and better livelihood( and brutally throwing them out if they resisted), devastating their ecology and rendering millions of adivasis and native people of Jharkhand landless, home less and jobless. They came literally on roads and the promises of proper rehabilitation and compensation proved

So on one side, government, hand in hand with national and multinational companies has planned to mine Jharkhand extensively, take people’s fertile agricultural land (through which they themselves ensure their food rights and are not dependent on government) and displace people on massive scale, there by all set to grab their land ensuring gross violations of their right to food, livelihood, safe environment, balanced ecology and what not. On the other hand government is getting prepared to distribute subsidised food to them. This is an irony. From a self dependent farmers and agriculturists, government wants them to be converted into a “government dependent poor” for entire life.

Over all tribal economy in Jharkhand (which claims to be a tribal state) is agriculture and forest based. More than 86% tribal population are dependent on agriculture, collection of minor forest produce, rearing small livestock and poultry. Instead of strengthening these livelihood options, what has been done is restricting their access to forest and forest produce complimented with the massive exploitation by staff and officials of forest department. Even after Forest Right Act, 2006, the access and control over forest and forest produce is largely controlled by forest department and implementation of the act in state has been abysmally worse. We should also not forget that instead of giving forest rights and right over forest produce to community government is all set to devastate the forest area and agricultural land of Jharkhand just for the profit of corporate and multinational companies.
Let us see an example of one of the most fertile lands of Jharkhand, i.e. Karnpura valley in Hazaribagh and Chatra District. Government plans to clear off massive forest and land in more than 200 villages in the vicinity of more than 1100 sq km for coal mining. People, there are fighting hard and have resolved not to give land. Community leaders have fiercely fought the mighty companies and when it became difficult for the companies to take over people, it started implicating false cases against activists. An activist known to us is being implicated in 5 false criminal cases.

Another starking example is of Kusum tola, where CCL is doing mining since last 3 decades. The Purnadih mine, which affects Kusum Tola and adjacent villages, officially opened on August 21th, 2009. Eviction of the hamlets of Dembua and Baseriya has already been carried out and the people of Kusum Tola are facing the threat of eviction. Inspite of the water table going down, decrease in agricultural yield due to ashes and severe pollution, constant life threats due to blasting, sever health hazards people were not ready to give land. When the community resisted land acquisition, community leaders were put to jail on charge of false cases and even then, when the community did not bend down life threats were given to the activists.

This is the level to which our government and companies goes to snatch peoples land and livelihood. And this is the tale of almost area of Jharkhand. Isn’t it a gross violation of people “Right to food and livelihood”?

In this light, the question of “Right to food” needs to be discussed in larger space and comprehensive manner. Hence, Jharkhand chapter of FIAN (which is an International Organisation working on “Right to Food” is organising a two days workshop with the representatives of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Community Service Organisations (CSOs) in the state with an aim to equip them to protect and enhance their “Right to Food and livelihood” in a much effective manner of Jharkhand. The detailed objectives of the training workshop are:

- Perspective building among members of CBOs and CSOs
- To increase the pace of entitlements of Right to Food
- Mainstreaming of food right issues in the regular course of implementation among CSOs / CBOs
- Orientations on Coal bearing area Act with regards to the acquisition and development 1957"
- To help the people to negotiate an enhanced R&R package, enhanced compensation, better replacement and rehabilitation measures and assuring basic livelihood and put the legal claim to the government for seeking the right to food, work, health, housing, sanitation and education to the affected tribal people
- To build up alliance of CSOs & CBOs with FIAN

For any query / information please feel free to contact:
FIAN Jharkhand - Phone no- 09304172151, Email: fianjharkhand@yahoo.com
Head Office FIAN India, 5/26 A, Ground Floor, Jangpura-B, New Delhi-14 India